GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:678
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2005
MISSING OF DEFENCE PERSONNEL
Sharma Shri Madan Lal

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of defence personnel have been reported missing for the last several years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken by the Government to find out the whereabouts of such missing personnel?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) & (c): A Statement is attached.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY GIVEN TO PARTS (b) & (c) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 678 FOR 28.7.2005

As per information available, one Army person of the 1965 war and 255 Army personnel of the 1971 war are missing. It is clarified that those persons are presumed dead who are so accepted by the next of kin and to whom all dues as applicable have been paid. If the next of kin have not accepted the person as presumed dead, that person continues to be deemed as 'missing'. In addition to those missing in the 1965 and 1971 wars, 15 more personnel are missing subsequent to the 1971 war, of which 13 are presumed dead. In the last ten years a total of 8 Naval personnel have been missing. The number of Air Force personnel missing is 25.

As per the current policy, soldiers missing during the 1965 and 1971 wars are presumed to be dead. However, Government, through diplomatic channels, has been consistently taking up the issue of the early release and repatriation of the Prisoners of Wars believed to be in the custody of Pakistan. The matter was also raised during the visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan to New Delhi during November, 2004. It was also discussed during the Foreign Secretaries level discussions on December 27, 2004. Pakistan has not acknowledged the presence of any prisoners of war in its custody.